



**Directive # 2018-D-003** (revised)

**Subject:** Air Carriers Assisting Passengers who are blind travelling through Toronto Pearson.

**From:** Customer & Terminal Services

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**Date of Issue:** 2018-06-08

**Date of Issue (Revised):** 2018-06-15

## **Background and Impact:**

### Introduction

The Greater Toronto Airports Authority ("GTAA") is responsible for the management, operation, and maintenance of Toronto Pearson International Airport ("Pearson Airport").

This directive relates to the provision of accessibility-related assistance to passengers who are blind and travelling through Pearson Airport by air carriers and their respective ground handling service providers.

The GTAA is issuing this directive pursuant to a decision by the Canadian Transportation Agency ("CTA"). The CTA's decision relates to an application filed with the CTA by a passenger who is blind in 2014, regarding the accommodation of their disability-related needs at Pearson Airport.

### Background Facts

Since 2014, the services, procedures and amenities to assist passengers with disabilities at Pearson Airport have evolved significantly. Change is ongoing and is being achieved through extensive consultation and collaboration between the GTAA, air carriers, ground handling service providers and advocates for persons with disabilities.

Pursuant to a decision by the CTA, the GTAA recently consulted air carriers operating at Pearson Airport and disability rights organizations to solicit their recommendations relating to the provision of accessibility-related assistance for passengers who are blind travelling

through Pearson Airport. The responses provided to the GTAA were consolidated and submitted to the CTA.

The CTA has now issued a further decision requiring the GTAA to communicate with all air carriers and service providers at Pearson Airport to ask that they adjust their policies and procedures to adhere to the following with respect to their passengers who are blind and travelling through Pearson Airport:

1. Extend the provision of mobility assistance for passengers who are blind to be available from curbside upon departure to curbside on arrival, including the coordination of porter assistance to handle the passenger's luggage;
2. Reinforce that a passenger who is blind and who has requested guiding assistance should not be met with a wheelchair, but rather by a staff member from the air carrier or its service provider who is competent to provide guiding assistance;
3. Amend training programs, as appropriate, such that the air carrier or service provider's respective employees understand the different levels of blindness, the gradations of assistance that may be required and how to effectively provide guiding assistance; and
4. Meet and periodically review information concerning passengers who are blind and who have requested and received guiding assistance, so as to understand the origin of any problems raised by passengers who are blind. This information should be used by the air carriers and their service providers to implement further targeted improvements.

Air carriers and their service providers are directed to make the necessary changes and are urged to communicate immediately with their internal service teams and external ground handling service providers regarding this requirement. In accordance with the decision issued by the CTA, the GTAA will periodically request updates from the air carriers and their respective service providers with respect to their progress in implementing the adjustments noted above.



Craig Bradbrook,  
Vice President, Aviation Services